

Selwa A. F. Al-Hazzaa

Head, Ophthalmology Department
King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center
Professor, Alfaisal University
Adjunct Professor, University of Southern California
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
salhazzaa@alfaisal.edu



Professor Selwa A. F. Al-Hazzaa is a Saudi ophthalmologist at King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center and has been chairman/head of the Ophthalmology Department since 1997. She is considered one of the most influential personalities in Saudi Arabia, and the Arab World in general. She is also considered to be a pioneer for Saudi women, as she is one of the first Saudi women to achieve international success academically, professionally, and politically. She has been an active advocate in EMPOWERING Saudi women with the support of the Royal Family after being appointed the first female physician to enter the royal palace to treat the late King Fahad 1997 - 2005.

In January 2007, Dr. Al-Hazzaa was appointed as senior advisor to the Minister of Health, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In 2003 she was the first female advisor to the Saudi Parliament, Majlis Al-Shura. In January 11, 2013, in a historical move and per Royal Decree from late King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Dr. Al-Hazzaa became one of the first ever-female members of Majlis Al-Shura, allowing women for the first time to be part of the Kingdom's formal advisory body.

Dr. Al-Hazzaa was named "Arab Women of the Year" in the field of medicine and community services in 2005 from the Arab Women Studies Center in Paris. In addition, Forbes International Magazine chose her as one of "The Most Powerful Arab Women for Year 2005" and was again chosen as the "Arab Woman for Year 2006." Most recently, she was the recipient of two awards, the Arab Women Award 2015 in the field of medicine and the Lifetime Achievement award. Dr Al-Hazzaa was also awarded as a "Distinguished Saudi Women in Medicine & Health for 2015" from Sayidaty Awards.

Dr. Al-Hazzaa was granted a Doctor of Humanities degree, Honoris Causa, the highest honor of the Franklin University in Switzerland in 2007. She was elected as an executive member of the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO), the highest rank in Ophthalmology worldwide, being the youngest member; the first female from the Middle East, and the only female ophthalmologist from the five continents. Currently Dr. Al-Hazzaa is a professor in the College Of Medicine at Al-Faisal University, Saudi Arabia and adjunct professor at Keck College of Medicine; University of Southern California, USA. As for medical breakthroughs, in November 2019 Dr. Al-Hazzaa continues her efforts for excellence and became the first surgeon in the Middle East to utilize the Luxturna injection for the Inherited Retinal Diseases with RPE65 mutation to make KSA the fifth country globally.

Dr. Al-Hazzaa is an author of more than 70 articles, editorials, review articles, and book chapters, the most important of those published in Duane's International Ophthalmology entitled "Genetic Eye Diseases in Saudi Arabia."